



Clean Water Indiana 2021 Non-SWCD Led Competitive Grant Guidance

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC 14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to Support Indiana conservation groups (nonprofits or units or subdivisions of government), in cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, in efforts to address the priority concerns of the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) business plan. The SSCB is accepting competitive proposals for targeted projects up to three years in length. The Clean Water Indiana fund is administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) under the direction of the SSCB (IC 14-32-8-6).

Application and Selection Process: All interested parties **must submit** a concept paper to the SSCB, which will be reviewed at their meeting on July 21st, 2020 in Indianapolis. At this meeting, the SSCB will decide which concepts will move on for further consideration for CWI funding. Selected concepts will receive applications, which will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD led proposals for CWI funding consideration. The CWI grants committee's funding recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects will be presented to the full SSCB at the October SSCB meeting.

Contact the State Soil Conservation Board at cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov to request the concept paper form.

Deadlines: Concept papers are due **Thursday, July 16th, 2020** and any further applications must be submitted by **September 11, 2020, at 4 pm EDT**. Submit concept papers to cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov.

The link to the online application is available on the Clean Water Indiana Page of the ISDA website. (<http://www.in.gov/isda/3441.htm>) Applications are completely online and can be updated in your browser. Applications will be submitted via a web portal that is forthcoming. Districts should complete the online application and may attach zero (0) to three (3) additional 8.5x11 pages if desired. Attachments will be accepted in word document or pdf format and are limited to 3 pages total. For example a district could submit 1 document of no more than 3 pages or up to 3 single page documents. Attachments should provide material support and clarity for the application narrative for the proposal but will not be scored on their own.

All applications will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD led proposals for CWI funding consideration. The CWI grants committee's funding recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects will be presented to the full SSCB at the October SSCB meeting.

Commented [TG(1)]: Will work with Karrie on this piece.
Attachments were changed from a max of 5 to a max of 3.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by **September 11, 2020 at 4 pm EDT**. By submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies that each partnering district has agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Eligible Applicants: Applications can be submitted by natural resource related conservation groups in the State of Indiana. Preference may be given to projects tied to the Indiana Conservation Partnership and its shared goals.

Ineligible Projects: The 2021 CWI grant program cannot be used to fund research equipment. Conservation practices and lab analysis of soil and water that are components of research projects are eligible. Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. *Example: CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes above and beyond the requirement outlined in the MS4 permit's Storm Water Quality Management Plan*

Commented [TG(2)]: Removed rain barrels as an ineligible practice. Puts the burden on applicant to tie projects to soil and water.

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or self-promotional materials (i.e. mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc.)

Proposal Logistics: This grant opportunity is competitive. The grant proposal must document how the grant funds will address at least two of the State priority resource concerns referenced in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2020. The plan can be found at <https://www.in.gov/isda/2361.htm>. Proposals can be for any amount that would accomplish the project described. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged.

Commented [TG(3)]: Business plan should be approved at the March 17 meeting and uploaded online.

Project Dates: All Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start on January 1, 2021 and must be finished and all funds spent by December 31, 2023.
If funded, lead entities will need to set up a vendor and bidder profile with the State of Indiana.

Project Description: The proposal must identify the current natural resource concern(s) in the selected district(s). The proposal must also identify how addressing this resource concern pertains to both the organization's business plan and the SSCB business plan.

Partnerships: New application must state clearly what each partner and participating district will be contributing to the proposed project (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.) Partnering local districts and organizations must be identified with a point of contact for the project, their contact information, and an explanation of any anticipated cash or in kind match from the partner.

Conservation Practices: Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. *Please note that pollinator plantings must be free of species that are noxious, invasive, and/or all amaranth. To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, the grantee MUST request the seed lab card from the distributor. For more information, please contact your DSS.* For cost-share practices, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation practice cost. At least 25% of the cost must be provided by the landowner/producer as match. However, cover crop cost share is limited to a maximum of \$20/acre. If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to SWCDs who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars and prioritizing first-time users.

Match Requirements: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state, and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. Proposals that request funds for staffing require a 25% cash or in-kind match for the staffing component. *Example: District A submits a \$10,000 for solely a staff position. District A's proposal requires a match of \$2,500. District B submits a \$10,000 proposal that includes \$5,000 for staff and \$5,000 for cost share. Proposal B is required to have \$3,750 match.* The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project. The grants committee may give preference to cash match rather than in kind during the scoring process. Grant proposals must use the match standards outlined below to develop their project budget.

Scoring Procedures: The SSCB will utilize a scoring sheet to aid in ranking the proposals. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds.

Commented [TG(4)]: Committee advising that for the work it takes to blind score them, it may not be worth it. And there may be advantages to knowing where a certain project is (ie, a project focusing on a 205j listed body of water)

Process of Payments: All funded entities are required to register as a bidder with the State of Indiana. Instructions for registration can be obtained from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) grants program manager. Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, the ISDA will issue an electronic contract to the grantee. Grantees must return their electronically signed contract to ISDA within 30 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Up to 50 percent of grant funding may be disbursed at the beginning of the grant, if justified by the applicant in their proposal and approved by the SSCB. All other payments will be made as reimbursement 45 days in arrears upon receipt of an updated report and claim voucher. *Please note that reimbursement claims may be made no more frequently than quarterly and require updated financial reporting, a claim voucher and a Quickbooks or similar financial report showing that requested funds have been paid by the lead entity.*

Reporting Requirements: Financial and project status reports will be required for the duration of the grant and a final report will be due at the end of the grant. The grant reporting forms will be provided. This report must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. These reports will be due 30 days following the anniversary date of the grant and are cumulative. *Example: grants that begin on January 1st will have reports due January 31st and July 31st.* The first report will be due on July 31st, 2021. Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through SharePoint's conservation tracking system on a (minimum) quarterly basis.

Grant Reviews: ISDA routinely visits with its grantees to ensure projects and grants are proceeding as intended and offer guidance and support if needed. Each year, ISDA will strategically select grants to review. These reviews can include open grants and grants that have been completed in the last three years. Upon completion of a review, ISDA will send a summary of results to the organization involved in the project and their board (if applicable). Failure to make progress on the project or report progress as specified in the grant agreement, as observed in a formal review or routine reporting checks, will be noted in a project's file and may jeopardize an organization's ability to receive competitive grant funds in future cycles.

Questions: Please contact the State Soil Conservation Board at cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov.

Commented [TG(5)]: Contact information changed to SSCB. Geneva will receive and respond to questions.